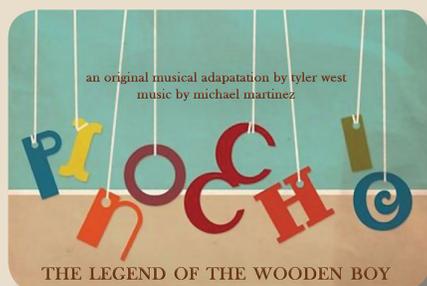


# Messenger

Changing the world through Christ, by caring for all people.

St. Mark's  
United Methodist

## Pinocchio: The Legend of the Wooden Boy



**Saturday, Sept. 14, Fellowship Hall - 6:30 p.m.**

Family Ministries Committee has joined with Live Theatre Workshop to bring you **Pinocchio: The Legend of the Wooden Boy**. This is an original musical adaptation, and promises to be a fun show filled with masks, costumes, and shadow puppetry! For only \$5 each, you can enjoy a great pizza dinner, and a fun show for all ages. Visit the calendar on our website [www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org) to make a **reservation** or call (297-2062) the church office. You may drop off your ticket payment prior to the show at the church office, or pay at the door the evening of the performance.

## Silverwood Duo in Concert

This season's Musical Musings begins with a flute/guitar concert on Sunday, Sept. 15. The Silverwood Duo will perform in the Sanctuary at 3:00 p.m. This concert is free and open to the community. Members of St. Mark's congregation are encouraged to attend and bring friends, neighbors, and members of their families. A freewill offering will be collected following the concert.



The delightful combination of flute and guitar provides the Silverwood Duo with diverse and timeless music for all occasions. With a

debut recital at Carnegie Hall, the ensemble has also been invited to play concerts in Ohio, Michigan, Las Vegas, South Carolina, California, and New York.

Flutist Renée Bond has been praised for her "lyrically beautiful flute playing." Her dedication to the flute has led her to performances in over twelve countries and throughout the United States. She received degrees in flute performance from UC Santa Barbara (BM), The Boston Conservatory (MM), and University of Arizona (DMA). She has taught at the University of Arizona and the Heidelberg School of the Arts and currently maintains a private teaching studio.

Guitarist Paige Jackson is hailed for her "artistically refined guitar performances." She appears frequently as a soloist and chamber musician in traditional and unconventional venues. As a Theodore Presser Scholar she lived in Brazil for two years, and also concertized as a Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholar. She received degrees in guitar performance from University of Akron (BM) and University of Arizona (MM). She teaches at the Musical Hearts Guitar Academy and is on the faculty at Pima Community College and Basis.

## Welcome Bruce Phillips

St. Mark's excitedly welcomes Bruce Phillips as our new Director of Children's Music. "Papa Bruce" (as he prefers to be called) will be working with our preschool and elementary school age children through our Sunday School program starting Sunday, Sept. 8.

Bruce Phillips is a professional children's musician, educator, entertainer, and songwriter who lives in Tucson. He has more than thirty years of classroom and performance experience and has presented many workshops for teachers and human service professionals. As a performer and teacher, Bruce visits schools, camps, churches, arts programs, and human services facilities in Tucson and around the country. He has presented many workshops and keynotes on the effective use of music in classrooms and human service

work. Most of all, Bruce simply enjoys singing and sharing music, music designed to promote community and build self-esteem and, of course, to having a great time. He is currently working on his fourth album of music for children.

To learn more about Papa Bruce, visit his website at <http://hstrial-brucephillips.homestead.com/index.html>. And, if you have the opportunity to meet him personally, please greet him with a warm St. Mark's welcome.



# What Does it Mean to Be United Methodist?

## Find Out in Worship in September

Would you like to learn more about being United Methodist, like important learnings from our history, our main beliefs and how being United Methodist makes a difference in our lives? All you need to do is be in worship in September. We'll be talking about "Finding Our Way in the United Methodist Tradition."

**September 8 – "Returning to Grace"**

**September 15 – "Deciding About Matters of Faith – A Wesleyan Model"**

**September 22 – "Who Wants to Practice Holy Living?!"**

**September 29 – "Putting Faith Into Action – Learning from our Wesleyan Tradition"**

This is part of our year-long emphasis on "What the Bible Really Says About...." See you in church, or via our livestream at [umcstmarks.org](http://umcstmarks.org) (LIVE WORSHIP).

Pastor Sharon

## 8th Annual Appreciation Block Party



**Wednesday, Sept. 11, 4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.**

Once again, St. Mark's will team up with Mountain View Retirement Village to host the 8th annual First Responders Appreciation Block Party on Wednesday, Sept. 11. This year the event starts at 4:00 p.m.! Come celebrate our local first responders across the street from the church at Mountain View Retirement Village (7900 N. La Cañada Dr.). Pastor Sharon will provide the invocation and blessing. Entertainment will include a musical performance from the St. Mark's 9/11 choir ensemble, directed by Sondra Franks. Other members of the community will also participate in the program.

A delicious barbecue dinner will be served (to eat there or take home) and many of the local first responders will be on hand so you can give thanks. If you plan to attend, please use St. Mark's parking lot, as parking accommodations at Mtn. View during the event will be restricted to only pedestrian traffic.

## Caring for Our Children

St. Mark's is committed to *caring for our children*. If you are currently a St. Mark's childcare worker or if you are interested in becoming one, come to Childcare Training on Sunday, Sept. 15, 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. It is offered to those 7th grade through adult who enjoy interacting with young children and aren't afraid to change a diaper or get down on the floor and play.



Current and new childcare workers are required to attend the training. Being a St. Mark's childcare worker is a part-time, paid position. Shifts are primarily Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings during worship, however there are other day and evening slots available as needed. Childcare staff sign up for shifts using SignUpGenius based on their availability. It's a great way to gain job experience and earn some spending money in the process.

CPR training is required for all childcare workers. CPR training is scheduled from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 15, prior to the childcare training. There is no fee for childcare staff. Please contact Ruth Kester ([ruthk@umcstmarks.org](mailto:ruthk@umcstmarks.org) or 297-2062) for more information or to register for the training. The registration deadline is Wednesday, Sept. 11.

## Soul Station Meal Volunteers Needed

**Openings to prepare September and October meals!**

Each Wednesday at Soul Station, a meal is served at 5:45 p.m. that is prepared for about 75 people by individuals, groups, and committees from St. Mark's. We have a number Wednesdays open in September and October for volunteers to sign up.

Now, it's easier than ever to sign up. Go to our website ([www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org)), select RESOURCES menu, then select SOUL STATION MEALS. Next, click the link that says *Signup Genius* and register to prepare a meal. Opportunities are available in September and October, but if you or your group would like to register for a date beyond that, please contact Pastor Stuart, our Soul Station Coordinator ([stuart@umcstmarks.org](mailto:stuart@umcstmarks.org) or 297-2062). The last Wednesday each month is potluck!



# Adult Spiritual Growth

Faith is a journey!

Visit us in the courtyard on Sundays and check out all the Adult Spiritual Growth opportunities posted on the bulletin board. A member of the Adult Spiritual Growth team will be available for questions or to help you discern the next steps of your faith journey. Or, for details about each study, start dates, and registration go to [www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org), and select CLASSES from the menu.

## Now Is The Time!

How many times have you said to yourself...

- "I wish I knew more about the Bible."
- "I want to have a daily devotion practice, but it's so hard to get started."
- "I would like to understand how the pieces of the Bible fit together."
- "I need the fellowship of believers during these hard times."
- "What does 'being a disciple of Christ' even mean?"
- "How do I put faith into practice?"

If you answered yes to any of these questions, or if you simply have a longing to draw closer to God and other believers, **Disciple Bible Study I: Becoming Disciples through Bible Study** is for you.

Class begins on Sept. 29. We meet on Mondays from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in the church Library. There is still time to register and we look forward to having you be a part of this amazing experience!

## Passages in Caregiving: Turning Chaos into Confidence

Presented by the Counselor in Residence program and facilitated by Mary Lu Kiracofe, this six-week class begins on Thursday, Oct. 10, at 12:30 p.m., in the Library. This is for those of you currently facing the challenges of caregiving for a loved one.

As a caregiver, you understand how difficult it is to make time for your own needs, and yet it is essential to your own stamina, mental health and quality of caregiving. Using the book by Gail Sheehy, **Passages in Caregiving: Turning Chaos Into Confidence** and the support and insight of the class participants, we will explore issues ranging from receiving and understanding the diagnosis, the art of advocacy, ways of mobilizing family, friend and

## One-Day Retreat

**Communication as a Spiritual Practice: Part 2**

Saturday, Sept. 21, 9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.,  
Redemptorist Renewal Center (Picture Rocks)

Kim Pearce will again lead the group as she continues and expands on her special topic area: **the spirituality of communication**. Many of you participated in Kim's retreat earlier this year and you overwhelmingly requested that she return and continue the conversation—so, here it comes!

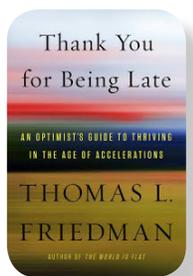
Registration has begun. Don't wait too long – registration is limited to 40 people. The cost is \$40 (including lunch and materials) and scholarships are available, if needed.

## Open Minds Book Study

Friday, Sept. 27, 9:30-11:00 a.m., church Library  
Led by Todd and Tyger Penson

In a little over a month, the Open Minds Book Study will be up and running again and we hope you will be part of it! At our first gathering, we will review **Thanks for Being Late** by Thomas L. Friedman.

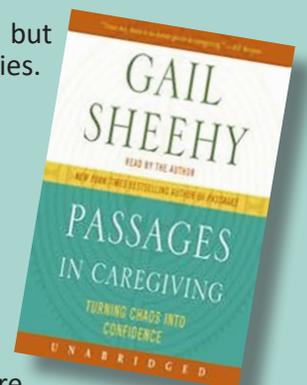
It will be a good discussion book on the "tectonic movements that are reshaping the world." Friedman attempts to explain how we can get the most out of them. He believes that 2007 was a pivotal year, marked by the release of the iPhone and other technological advances that has changed how we live. Other high points are mentioned throughout the book.



Hope you have a chance to read it. We look forward to seeing you, and remember your friends are also welcome! Coffee will be served. For information, contact Todd or Tyger Penson (see directory).

community resources, and last but not least, valued self-care strategies.

Please contact Mary Lu Kiracofe (297-6386) to register, or if you have questions. You may also register online at [www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org). Class size is limited, so be sure to register early. If you would like, you may purchase or borrow the book, **Passages in Caregiving**. Copies are available at the church Library, or from the public library. There is no charge for the class.



## Christian Education Sunday

Sunday, Sept. 8, is Christian Education Sunday. One of the blessings of the day is that 3rd graders receive Bibles from the church family. If you know a 3rd grader, please contact Margaret Synhorst ([margaret@umcstmarks.org](mailto:margaret@umcstmarks.org) or 297-2062) and let her know. We want to make sure everyone gets a Bible!



## Nash Neighbors Classroom Help

Have you ever thought about helping in an elementary school classroom? Seventeen years ago, St. Mark's and Nash Elementary School formed a partnership that continues today in a number of ways. One of those is to provide classroom volunteers for Nash teachers. Currently, fourteen persons from the church volunteer there. Just this past school year, our volunteers spent 925 hours in the classrooms. However, there is always room for more St. Mark's helpers.

If you think you would like to volunteer at the school, you would be very welcomed by us and by the Nash staff. For more information, you can find information on the large bulletin board that is in the courtyard each Sunday, or contact Sue Pierce (see directory). Hope you decide to be one of our volunteers at Nash Elementary School. It's a very special place!

*Nash Neighbors Committee*

## Habitat For Humanity Ten Volunteers Needed!

Brush With Kindness is a cleanup, beautification, painting, and minor repair project focused on the revitalization of distressed neighborhoods. St Mark's UMC has committed to a half day work project from 7:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sept. 21. We need ten volunteers! We will carpool from the south parking lot of church at 6:45 a.m.



The client, Ms. McGarry, lives in Picture Rocks with her dog. She used to work in construction, but due to rheumatoid arthritis she is retired. Due to lack of funds and limited ability home repairs at her home have been neglected. Habitat for Humanity has made repairs in her bathroom, installed railings on stairs and deck, replaced broken floor tiles, water heater, and installed energy efficient windows. Now, our job as volunteers is to put the finishing touches on the exterior of her home with a fresh coat of paint, possibly repair skirting, and some light landscaping.

If you are interested, look for the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board in the courtyard on Sunday. If you come, remember to wear close toed shoes, bring hats, and sunscreen. Habitat provides all materials, snacks and water! If you need more information contact Casey Compennolle (see directory).

## "Fear of the Other" TESTIMONIALS



*Fear of the Other* was well worth the time to read and discuss. If you missed the study, you have the opportunity to read the book on your own. Even better, another group could form and meet at a time convenient to those new participants. Talk with Margaret Synhorst (520-297-2062) or Judy Boroto (see directory) if interested.

Here are some comments from those who took part in the recent book study:

- ⇒ The discussion helped me look at my beliefs and biases and broadened my perspective about how to love all of God's children.
- ⇒ My exposure to other cultures has been fairly limited, just because of where we happened to live both where I was growing up and as an adult. This class has been interesting to me because I haven't spent a lot of time thinking about "the other." This class has given me a lot to think about.
- ⇒ I'll never think of the word "other" in the same way.
- ⇒ Great class discussions. It could easily be two hours and still hold interest. Time went fast, with a nice balance between video and discussions. What I realized through the class is more of an awareness of the other. I have little exposure time to the other, raising a need to reach out more and not be fearful. As the last chapter put it, Jesus, the other.
- ⇒ My favorite part of the class was when we tried to identify who might be the other, or our neighbors in the vicinity of our church, who have needs and how we might be of help.

## CPR Refresher Class

There is still time to register for a refresher in CPR. St. Mark's will offer Community CPR (Continuous Chest Compression) on Sunday, Sept. 15, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. This is a non-certification course, participants will receive a card for completing the training. Through this abbreviated class, you will receive basic information and skills to perform CPR in emergencies. The cost is \$10 per person, and registration is required. For more information or to register, please contact Ruth Kester ([ruthk@umcstmarks.org](mailto:ruthk@umcstmarks.org) or 297-2062). The registration deadline is Wednesday, Sept. 11.



# Update from Worldwide Christian Support Task Force

## U.S. State Department's 2018 Annual Report on International Religious Freedom—India

The State Department's Report tracks countries to see how well they have respected the fundamental human right of religious freedom. Among the countries tracked are the six focus countries on which St. Mark's Task Force has concentrated – Nigeria, Egypt, India, Myanmar, Syria, and Mexico. This update is the third in our series and provides excerpts on India.

The Report stated that according to the India Ministry of Home Affairs data presented in the lower house of Parliament, communal incidents of religious persecution increased by 9% from 2015 to 2017, with 822 incidents resulting in 111 deaths, and 2,384 injuries in 2017. The NGO Prosecution Relief reported 477 incidents of violence against Christians in its 2018 annual report compared with 440 in 2017. According to the NGO Persecution Relief's 2017 Annual Report, there were 736 incidents of persecution against Christians compared to 348 in 2016.

Churches were allegedly targeted by Hindu nationalist groups claiming "conversions through force or fraud" resulting in disrupted worship services harassment of pastors and worshipers, and the detention of pastors and lay Christians. Nine of the 29 states have laws restricting religious conversion. The NGO Alliance Defending Freedom in India stated that authorities pursued charges against members of the minority Christian community in several states under religious conversion laws. For example, police in Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur District charged

271 Christians with "spreading lies about Hinduism" and allegedly drugging people to try to convert them to Christianity. The police action came after a local Hindu groups filed a complaint with the court alleging that the Christians refused to stop conducting Sunday prayer services and spread misinformation about Hindus. In Ujjain Madhya Pradesh, Hindu supporters of a BJP member of parliament attacked a Catholic hospital and roughly handled nurses and nuns and several nurses were injured. Hospital authorities contacted the police but they did not respond.

The National Commission for Minorities, which has no enforcement powers investigates allegations of religious discrimination and may submit their findings to law enforcement. In June, the US Ambassador and the visiting US Ambassador to the United Nations stressed the importance of religious freedom during interactions with multiple religious leaders in Delhi. In December, the Department of State Special Advisor for Religious Minorities met with government officials, religious minority groups, and civil society representatives in Delhi and Lucknow to discuss challenges faced by religious minorities in India.

If you would like more information about persecuted Christians, or to join St. Mark's Christian Persecution Task Force, email us ([christianpersecutiontaskforce@gmail.com](mailto:christianpersecutiontaskforce@gmail.com)) or drop us a note in our mailbox at the church office.



## Mystery Dinner and Tea: Dorothy Dinsmore Gossip Columnist



On Friday, Aug. 16 and Saturday, Aug. 17, the Faith on Stage actors performed a mystery play that was an old fashioned "who done it." There was much laughter as the characters tried to protect themselves from the secrets that Miss Dinsmore had on each one of them. The acting was superb and the costumes appropriately outrageous. At each performance the mystery was solved and the guests at that table received a special prize.

The dinner and the full tea were coordinated by Anita Winslow. Her team prepared a scrumptious meal and delicacies for the tea that would rival any restaurant. Thank you to everyone—all 50 volunteers who acted, cooked, bought food, cleaned or served. Each one of you helped to create an incredibly special event.

*Pastor Evy*

# WASS UP?

August 27, 2019

Volume 20, Issue 16



## UPCOMING MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL EVENTS

**September 1, 2019— Labor Day**  
**NO YOUTH GROUP**

**September 8, 2019—**  
**Confirmation**

8th graders & above, not yet confirmed  
4:00 to 6:00  
High School  
Discussion Study

Middle School  
World Record Night

**September 15, 2019—**  
**1:30 to 4:00**  
**Youth Leadership Team**  
(See back of this page)

4:00 to 6:00  
Funtastics  
Water park, go carts, golf.....

Greetings Preteen Families,  
I hope everyone's school year is off to a good start.

At PreTeen, going to be an exciting year! I have planned lots of Fun Filled Fellowship activities for this year. We will play silly games, go on field trips, have mini cooking activities and projects, all while learning about God's love.

Hope to see you on Sunday's.  
Blessings, Julie

**September 1st—Labor Day**  
**No PreTeen group**

**September 8th -**  
Water and Silly Games. Be prepared to get a little wet.

**September 15th -**  
Field Trip / Ice cream run to Dairy Queen. You will need a permission slip and \$1.00.

**BRING FRIENDS.**  
**THEY'RE ALWAYS WELCOME!**

Find us on Social Media!



St. Mark's Youth Group



stmarksumyf

## CONFIRMATION SEPT. 8

Confirmation is for students in Grades 8 and above, who have not yet been confirmed. We meet Sundays at 9:45 a.m. in room 20, next to the library. Confirmation runs 9/8/19 to 5/10/20.

## YOUTH LEADERSHIP TEAM

Calling all leaders! This year, our Youth Group has a really exciting new opportunity! On September 15, we will start the Youth Leadership Team. The St. Mark's Youth Leadership Team is a student leadership team who gets to help plan and run part of youth group meetings throughout the year. Kim and Rachel will have applications for you soon, so this is a good time to start thinking about being a part of this fun new group! If you are selected to be on the Youth Leadership Team, you will have three trainings throughout the year, where you will learn leadership skills and put them in action at our weekly Youth Group meetings. There won't be other meetings—just those three. Can't wait to see you there!

## What's "High School Discussion Study"?

It's an opportunity for High School Students to meet off campus to discuss contemporary topics and how they relate to what we know about the Bible. We meet at the Wesley House at 4, and then go to another location for discussion. It frequently involves Starbucks.

While all high schoolers are invited, 9th graders have the option of staying at the Wesley House for that night's program.



## September Birthdays

9/3 Rachel Mosher  
9/9 Daniel Titzel  
9/21 Tristen Turner  
9/28 Cait Rowden

## Staff Planning Retreat

For a number of years, the St. Mark's administrative staff has conducted annual planning retreats during August for the purpose of identifying goals and priorities, reviewing progress of the assigned projects that help us meet our goals and looking forward to the coming year to identify new opportunities for growing our church. This year, the staff enjoyed dinner at Pinnacle Peak prior to our evening planning session.



**The Over 50 Lunch Group** will meet on Tuesday, Sept. 3, at the Red Lobster restaurant (5061 N Oracle Rd.) at 11:30 a.m. Please contact Deb Brown (see directory) if you plan to attend. Everyone is invited to this casual dining experience for fun, fellowship, and fantastic food!

## PRAYER CORNER

We are a praying community at St. Mark's. Besides Sunday worship, you may submit prayer requests by email to [prayerchain@umcstmarks.org](mailto:prayerchain@umcstmarks.org). You may also, visit our Prayer Room on campus and leave a prayer on our prayer wall.

*Ellen Beene  
Jared Bowman & family  
Clara Campbell  
Donald Chester  
Shelley Shelton Coltrin*

*Deb Cushman  
Judy Drescher  
April DuBoce  
Keith and Mary Ann Glazier  
Jim Sanders*

*Carol Underwood  
Jackie Vickers  
Dave and Jan Webster  
Lindsay Williams*

## CONDOLENCES

We extend our sympathy and prayers to:

- ✿ the family of Patricia Keele who passed away on Thursday, August 22, 2019, and a memorial service was held on Tuesday, August 27, at St. Mark's.
- ✿ the family of Max Kuehnlenz, who passed away in Texas on August 9, 2019. Max moved to Texas a couple of years ago to be with his daughter, Evelyn. Services will be held there.

## LOVED ONES IN THE MILITARY

Please keep these people in your prayers. Email additions or updates to [messenger@umcstmarks.org](mailto:messenger@umcstmarks.org).

**Hank Bautzmann**, son of Nancy Bautzmann  
**Alex Boettcher**, grandson of Carla and Paul Boettcher  
**Christian Bowers**, grandson of Doug & Charlotte Bowers  
**Jon Chytka**, nephew of Donna Severson  
**Zachary Dojaquez**, grandson of Donna Severson  
**Patrick Emmett**, son of Julie Wiens  
**Mike Freeman**, son of Ken & Ann Freeman  
**Garrett Geer**, grandson of Ellen Wise  
**Matthew Hughey**, son of Juliee & Billy Morrison and grandson of Joyce Flick  
**Rachel Kester**, daughter of Don & Ruth Kester  
**Don Lauver**, Son-in-law of Linda Connolly  
**Sam Lennarson**, grandson of John & Sherri Lennarson

**Christopher Lewis**, grandson of Donald Lewis  
**Chad Long**, grandson of Pat Long  
**Jake Newton**, son of Robert & Cheri Newton  
**John O'Regan**, husband of Ashley O'Regan and grandson-in-law of Janet Krug  
**Brian Osborn**, pastor in the DSW Conference  
**William Putt**, son of Harold & Susan Putt  
**Geoffrey Shafe**, grandson of Mary Langemeier  
**Jason Smith**, grandson of Jerry & Judy Smith  
**Clint Staschke**, son-in-law of Cliff & June Young  
**Michael and Karisa Szczygiel**, daughter and son-in-law of Joyce Flick  
**Brianna Walker**, granddaughter of Barbara Fradenburgh; niece of Joan Fradenburgh



# Calendar Notes

## Sunday, Sept. 1

8:15 a.m. Traditional Service, Sanctuary  
\*9:45 a.m. Traditional Service, Sanctuary  
11:15 a.m. The Gathering, Sanctuary  
11:15 a.m. Common Grounds, Rm 20  
4:00 p.m. Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall  
4:00 p.m. No PreTeens, Rm 8/9  
4:00 p.m. No Youth Group, Wesley House

## Monday, Sept. 2

OFFICE CLOSED - LABOR DAY

## Tuesday, Sept. 3

11:30 a.m. Over 50s Lunch (off campus)

## Wednesday, Sept. 4

Noon BULLETIN DEADLINE  
5:45 p.m. Soul Station Dinner, Fellowship Hall  
6:15 p.m. Common Grounds, Library  
6:20 p.m. Soul Station program

7:00 p.m. Endowment Meeting, Conf. Rm.

## Thursday, Sept. 5

Noon MESSENGER DEADLINE  
7:00 p.m. Animal Ministry meeting, Library

## Sunday, Sept. 8

### Christian Education Sunday

8:15 a.m. Traditional Service, Sanctuary  
\*9:45 a.m. Traditional Service, Sanctuary  
11:15 a.m. The Gathering, Sanctuary  
11:15 a.m. Common Grounds, Rm 20  
4:00 p.m. Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall  
4:00 p.m. PreTeens, Rm 8/9  
4:00 p.m. Youth Group, Wesley House

## Monday, Sept. 9

9:00 a.m. Ties That Bind, Rm. 17/18  
9:15 a.m. Holy Yoga, Fellowship Hall

*\*This service is live-streamed.*



## St. Mark's Messenger

Published bi-weekly

St. Mark's UMC  
1431 W. Magee Road  
Tucson, AZ 85704  
(520) 297-2062

### Email:

[info@umcstmarks.org](mailto:info@umcstmarks.org)

### Website:

[www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org)

### Lead Pastor:

Rev. Sharon Ragland

Associate Pastors:

Stuart Salvatierra

Rev. Dr. Evy McDonald

### Sunday Worship:

8:15, 9:45\*, 11:15 a.m.

\*Live-streamed at

[www.umcstmarks.org](http://www.umcstmarks.org)

### Soul Station

Wednesday Night:

Dinner - 5:45 p.m.

Music/Programs

6:15-7:15 p.m.

## Missions Matter – Thank you for your support!

Your gift of \$2,500 will be used to further TMM Family Services, Inc. programs that serve the community. We sincerely thank you for your investment in the future of our program. We look forward to another very successful year, and we are very pleased you chose to be part of our TMM family.

*Raymond Wells, Director of Development*



The God of the universe has a plan for each person's life on Earth. There is always a remarkable story when God intersects human life through His Word and that person is changed forever. This is exactly what happens when a member of our military or a veteran receives a Military BibleStick. You are instrumental in sharing God's Word with our heroes.

*Morgan Jackson, Senior Vice President*



The dear people you just helped with your gift (\$7,956.71) to UMCOR may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be—Thank you! Through your financial support, you are serving within a vital network of interactive relationships as UMCOR responds to increasingly frequent and destructive storms, sharing 100% of donated funds with those in need!

*Roland Fernandes, COO and General Treasurer*



You are an important part of our very special community organization, Tu Nidito. Your gift of \$2,500 ensures that no child grieves alone and provide a haven for children to heal when impacted by serious illness or death of a loved one. Tu Nidito will serve more than 700 children this year. Because of you, we are able to provide support programming that is free of cost to grieving children and their families.

*Liz McCusker, Executive Director*



## Address Service Requested

If you would like to receive the Messenger electronically, and discontinue your paper copy, submit a request to [messenger@umcstmarks.org](mailto:messenger@umcstmarks.org)

## Reflections

Part way through our August 19-21, 2019, staff planning retreat I realized the depth of my gratitude for the deeply committed, hard-working, playful, skilled, caring people who make up our church staff. We reviewed St. Mark's mission statement and priorities and evaluated the plans we made at last year's retreat and made new plans. We talked together about the possibilities for the future of the United Methodist Church and our challenges in these uncertain times for the UMC. We talked about our commitment to working with all God's people, even as we know that people have different opinions and beliefs. We shared our joys and questions about the development of the second site and how we'll work together on that. Every staff member voiced goals for the upcoming year. And, we prayed, worshipped, talked and laughed together. In some ways it was hard with long hours and challenging topics. In other ways it was characterized by deep conversations and a strong sense of God's presence. Again, gratitude fills my heart when I reflect on our time together.

What now? Sometimes people ask me how I can juggle many and varied tasks and keep calm and focused when there is both so much to do and so much unknown about what the UMC will look like in the future. What I say is that I'm not as calm as I sometimes appear and it can be hard to

focus. I have a practice, though, of beginning each day with prayer, stopping at various times of the day to notice God's presence and voice, and ending each day with a review of the day. Sometimes that review challenges me to do better the next day. I try to ask God to help me let go of things that weigh on me and trust God's abiding, guiding presence.

*Blessings*

Some things are coming up. A **Special Annual Conference** (a meeting of the lay and clergy delegates of the Desert Southwest Conference) will be held on September 14, to consider legislation to send to the General Conference which will meet in Minneapolis, MN in May, 2020. Also, Susan Gerstad and I will be attending Leadership Institute at the Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, KS on September 25-27, where discussions will take place about the future of the UMC and General Conference legislation.

Meanwhile, we'll continue to do all the things we do at St. Mark's to welcome and include people and serve God in the world. I don't know about you, but I need to rely every day on the guiding presence of God, known to me in Jesus Christ.

*Blessings, Sharon*